



Dream Homes Community Center

To: Mayor Mark Boughton and the City Council
 From: Elke Sweeney, LCSW, Housing Advocate
 Re: May 2016 Monthly Report
 CC: ARC Executive Director & ARC Board of Directors

I. Program Synopsis

Per the proposal endorsed by Mayor Boughton and the City Council, Dream Homes Community Center (DHCC) was established at ARC to serve as the Point of Entry for people who are homeless or low-income renters, and to facilitate first-time home ownership for people with hard-to-serve backgrounds.

Program Updates

Dream Homes Community Center continues to persevere in the efforts to assist Danbury’s “Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness”. Through our Coordinated Access Services, Dream Homes Community Center has served **380 people** in the city of Danbury alone since July 1, 2015.

Point of Entry

Since July 1, 2015, DHCC has provided services to **542 people** through the Point of Entry at ARC. The following is a breakdown by town:

Town	This Month (May1 – May 31, 2016)	Year to Date (July 1, 2015 – May 31, 2016)
Danbury	41 (18 households)	380
Bethel	0	32
Brookfield	0	8
New Fairfield	3 (1 households)	9
New Milford	2 (1 households)	66
Newtown	0	0
Redding	0	0
Ridgefield	1 (1 households)	5
Sherman	0	2
Other Towns	3 (1 households)	40
Total	50 (22 households)	542 ppl

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May 2016 Outreach Highlights: Dream Homes Housing Advocates attended the following:

1. Met with *landlords* & performed inspections for clients' potential homes.
2. *Continuum of Care (COC)* meeting to discuss prioritization of **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) Vouchers** to be used for housing chronically homeless individuals with a disability in Danbury.
3. *Housing First Collaborative* to discuss how clients' chronicity of homelessness and VI-SPDAT scores will be used to select individuals for PSH and learn about program model designed to support newly housed clients.
4. *Housing Placement Committee (HPC)* to collaborate with other housing providers in order to determine which clients will receive the PSH Vouchers.
5. Statewide *Coordinated Access Network* to collaborate with providers from other counties on service models to best fit client needs.
6. *Housing sub-committee* for the **Danbury Housing Partnership** assisting with planning Landlord Coalition breakfast.
7. ARC's **Housing Advocate** Collaborate with *DARA (Danbury Area Refugee Assistance Program)* to provide Housing Advocacy for Syrian Refugee family of six.
8. Rapid Rehousing Program renewed for three years.
9. Youth Advocacy Meeting Sponsored by ARC. Housing advocates congregated to discuss needs of homeless and at-risk homeless youth. In attendance were agencies: DCF, DYS, Supportive Housing, Arms Acres, Four Winds Hospital, Danbury Public School Social Workers, DHA, City of Danbury, Catholic Charities, Harambee Youth and Community Center.

II. Because of the **City Grant**, the Point of Entry was able to leverage and renew additional funds to help end and prevent homelessness, including:

1. *Homeless Educational Grants*: Provides costs toward tuition, child care, school supplies, transportation, and/or uniforms while participants are attending school. Clients must meet HUDs definition of homelessness or have proof of homelessness within the last 18 months. Case management is provided for 3 months to implement budgeting & financial planning.
2. *Vouchers 1*: Provides rent for chronically homeless, one of which has one member of the household with a disability.
3. *Vouchers 2*: Provides rent for veterans who were chronically homeless & one of which the majority of rent is paid for a family with a veteran who was chronically homeless per DMHAS contract.

III. ***Program Highlights***—Story of one family/individual served by DHCC this month
A Point of Entry and Coordinated Access Success Story
(Names changed to maintain confidentiality)

Roger and his family were connected to ARC through **211** phone system. Roger and his family were at imminent risk of homelessness and were in process of being evicted. Roger and his family came to ARC to seek assistance with housing, and accessing social service programs. ARC's *Housing Advocate* served as a *guide and support system* in finding *safe, secure, and sanitary housing*, and *connected* Roger and his family of four to local *landlords*. ARC's *Housing Advocate* also facilitated *budgeting and rent readiness guidance*. During budgeting assessment, Roger and his wife realized areas where they could reduce spending and save money towards rental and transportation costs.

With ARC's assistance and guidance, Roger and his wife found an apartment suitable for their family's needs. Roger and his family are now housed. Their apartment met all requirements for *safe, secure, and sanitary housing*, and the apartment was within the *rent-reasonable* amount as determined by program guidelines.

ARC's *Housing Advocate* set-up a *care plan* for his *housing and case-management* needs. ARC's *Housing Advocate* also served as a *referral source* by connecting Roger and his family of four to programs such as **CAAWC** for energy assistance, ARC's **EAN Program**, and **YMCA** Summer program for their children.

A week after Roger and his family were housed, ARC's *Housing Advocate* stopped by for a home visit and delivered a welcome basket (\$125 donation of kitchen and bathroom supplies) to the family. Roger's wife Irene smiled with joy. Roger and his family are grateful for the *support, assistance, and advocacy* ARC was able to provide. ARC's *Housing Advocate* continues to follow-through with Roger and his family.